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Agenda Item 9(d)
SMMC
6/05/07

May 2, 2007

To: Agency Representatives and Interested
Individuals

File: I-5 HOV/Truck Lane Widening

Notice of Scoping/Initiation of Studies

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is formally initiating studies for a proposed widening project on Interstate 5 (I-5) in the City of Santa Clarita and northern unincorporated Los Angeles County. The project location is shown on the attached figure. Alternatives to provide high occupancy travel (HOV) and truck climbing lanes are being considered. The intent of the project is to serve existing and forecasted traffic volumes on the project segment of I-5, related to existing traffic, including trucks, and forecasted traffic based on approved and planned land uses in the area. There may be potentially significant impacts to the environment associated with construction, and right-of-way acquisition. These and other issues will be addressed in the environmental document. The attached map presents the general location of the proposed study.

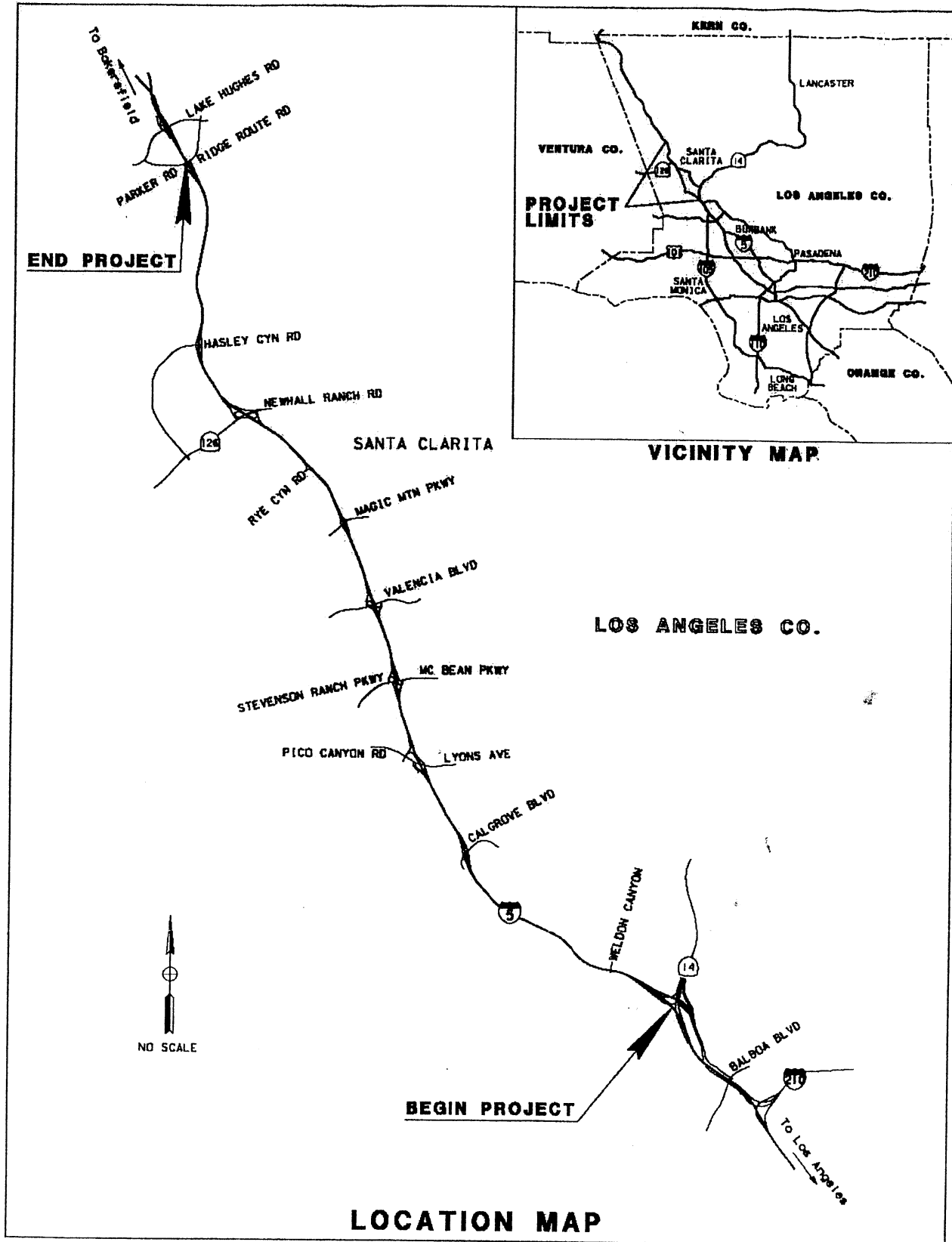
Based on preliminary environmental studies, the resulting environmental document is anticipated to be an Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS). Caltrans is currently soliciting written comments from elected officials, public agencies, private entities, and any interested/affected individuals who may want to express their opinions, concerns, and/or support for the project. Topics of concern regarding the proposed project may include potential social, economic, community, traffic, safety, and environmental issues. Any opinions pertaining to these issues are welcome and will be carefully considered. It would also be appreciated if any existing facilities or planned developments that may be either directly or indirectly impacted by this proposed project be brought to our attention.

Scoping meetings will be held on the proposed project and the environmental process. A scoping meeting for public agency representatives will be held on **June 4, 2007** at the City of Santa Clarita City Council Chambers, 23920 Valencia Boulevard, Santa Clarita, CA 91355, from 2 pm to 4:30 pm. The scoping meeting for the general public will be held that evening, at the same location, from 6 pm to 8 pm. Written comments will be accepted at this meeting.

Caltrans strives to work cooperatively with all pertinent parties in an effort to exchange ideas and to ensure that all factors are considered, and that a mutually acceptable project is constructed. Caltrans will be pleased to have your ongoing participation in this endeavor. Please send any written comments by **June 29, 2007** to:

"Caltrans improves mobility across California"

I-5 HOV/Truck Lanes Project Area



1.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is initiating an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Interstate 5 (I-5) High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)/Truck Lanes project. The project proposes to add one HOV lane in each direction on I-5 from the State Route 14 (SR-14) interchange at the southern project limit north to Parker Road, from post mile (PM) R45.4 to PM R59.0, a distance of approximately 13.6 miles. The project also proposes to add truck lanes in each direction from the SR-14 interchange to Parker Road. The project segment of I-5 crosses the City of Santa Clarita, the unincorporated community of Castaic and other parts of unincorporated northern Los Angeles County. The project area and the project limits are shown on Figure 1.

The purpose of the proposed I-5 project is to:

- Provide HOV lanes on the project segment of I-5, to extend the HOV facilities on I-5 south of SR-14 to the north, consistent with the Caltrans District-wide HOV Lane Program and other HOV lanes being constructed on I-5 south of the project limits
- Provide truck climbing lanes to reduce delays to other vehicles caused by slower moving trucks on this hilly and mountainous segment of I-5
- Increase the person and goods throughput on the project segment of I-5 by focusing on the provision of HOV and truck climbing lanes
- Reduce existing and forecasted traffic congestion on the project segment of I-5 associated with the high volumes of regional goods movement and existing and planned developments in the surrounding area
- Support the efficient and effective flow of goods and services into and out of southern California

Caltrans and FHWA propose to widen existing I-5 to include truck climbing lanes and HOV lanes from State Route 14 (SR-14) on the south to Parker Road on the north, a distance of approximately 13.6 miles. The proposed improvements include extending the existing HOV lanes on I-5 from SR-14 to Parker Road (a distance of approximately 13 miles), and adding truck climbing lanes from the SR-14 interchange Calgrove Boulevard (northbound) and Pico Canyon Road/Lyons Avenue (southbound), a distance of approximately 3-4 miles). The EIR will evaluate a constrained alternative, which would provide one HOV lane in each direction from SR-14 to Parker Road, and one truck climbing lane in each direction from SR-14 to Calgrove Boulevard (northbound) and Pico Canyon Road/Lyons Road (southbound) to SR-14. This constrained alternative would provide standard lane widths. The EIR will also evaluate a standard alternative, which includes the same HOV, and truck lanes as described above and which would provide for standard lane and shoulder widths. A No Build Alternative will also be evaluated in the EIR.